

*REMARKS/ARGUMENTS*

In reply to the restriction requirement in the Office Action mailed October 1, 2007, Applicants elect claims 17-23 for prosecution.

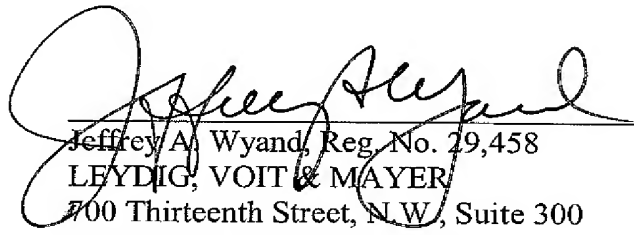
The Examiner also imposed a species election requirement which is not fully understood. The following response is made based upon that species election requirement to the extent it is understood. Claim 17 is acknowledged to be a generic claim as to claims 17-23. As understood, the Examiner is requiring an election with respect to the second and third raw material gases in claims 17-23. Applicants elect in that group of claims, as the second raw material gas, nitrogen, which is expressly mentioned in claim 20. Claim 20 does not describe any specific third raw material gases. Applicants also elect, with respect to the third raw material gas, a noble gas, expressly mentioned in claim 21. That claim 21 does not mention any specific second raw material gas. In fact, it is impossible to elect any single claim identifying specific gases for both of the second and third raw material gases.

As understood, based upon the election made, claims 17, 20, and 21 should be immediately examined. Upon the allowance of claim 17, claims 18, 19, 22, and 23 should be rejoined to the prosecution pursuant to 37 CFR 1.141.

Prompt and favorable examination of claims 17-23 is earnestly solicited.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any extension of time fees pursuant to 37 CFR 1.17(a)-(d) associated with this communication and to credit any excess payment to Deposit Account No. 12-1216. A duplicate copy of this Response is attached.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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October 18, 2007